PACS 611 RECONCILIATION

Fall 2018
Conrad Grebel University College, University of Waterloo
Wednesday 6:00 – 8:50 PM

Class Time: Wednesday 6:00 – 8:50 PM
Location: CGR 2201

Instructor: Dr. Narendran Kumarakulasingam
Email: n3kumara@uwaterloo.ca
Office Hours: By appointment
Phone: TBA in class

Course Description
How might collectives and individuals affected by mass violence and long-term oppression come to terms with themselves and others? How might they (re)build relationships and remake worlds both amidst, and after long term violence such that new futures are made possible? What kinds of praxis are necessary for the rebuilding of social worlds devastated by intractable conflicts involving not only war but also multiple forms of oppression?

Mindful of our collective presence on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron (Neutrals), the Anishinaabeg and Haudenosaunee peoples, and our classroom’s location in Block 2 of the Haldimand Tract, the land promised to the Six Nations that includes ten kilometers on each side of the Grand River, this course invites you to think creatively and concretely about reconciliation through a focus on the dialogical aspects of social rupture and repair. Beginning with the idea that reconciliation is a response to rupture, we will explore the ways in which violence -- whether direct or indirect, overt or covert -- ruptures shared meanings, expectations and relationships that are integral to being human. We will do so by engaging with testimony, fiction and secondary material from varied places including Canada, South Africa, the United States and Peru. Through the juxtaposition of historical, theoretical and first-hand testimonial sources, we will discern the concrete struggles faced and achievements made in the pursuit of forgiveness, healing, acknowledgment and apology both within and outside of the sphere of formal reconciliation initiatives such as truth commissions.

This course may differ from your expectations of what a reconciliation course may offer. Typically, reconciliation offers an alternative to retributive forms of justice, and has since the late 1980s, become anchored within the field of transitional justice. Consequently, many courses dealing with reconciliation tend to offer a survey of either the field of transitional justice, or of select mechanisms utilized in a national or global or local context. This course will take a different route. It is aimed at aiding you in developing the ethical dispositions as well as listening and analytical skills necessary to promote reconciliation outside of formal state and national
initiatives in contexts that are not necessarily in a post-war condition. As such, your subjectivity, commitment to deep learning, and openness to the messiness and ambiguities of conflict will be an integral part of our journey.

**Learning Outcomes**

Upon successfully completing this course, you should be able to:

- Analyze damage and reconciliation in relational terms
- Identify obstacles to the development of reconciliation initiatives
- Identify and interpret the significance of ambiguity, complexity, and multiplicity in testimonial practices
- Conceptually integrate history and embodied subjectivity in the analysis of violent conflict
- Creatively deploy a relational approach

**Course Requirements/Evaluation**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seminar Participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion Kickoff</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading Journal</td>
<td>20% (due every week)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Concept Exposition</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dialogical Essay</td>
<td>35%</td>
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**Seminar Participation (15%)**:

Since this is run as a graduate seminar, most of our class time will be spent in discussion. You are expected to come to each class having read and thought about the assigned material. The assigned readings are meant to provide a focal point for our conversations and are therefore critical. Overall, it might be helpful to think about our discussion as a semi-structured conversation meant to deepen our understanding of a common interest or set of themes and ideas. Good discussion skills will need to be cultivated – so, please pay attention to the structure and rhythm of our conversations. You can use the following questions as a guideline for monitoring your participation:

a) Was I always fully engaged in what was happening in class or was I distracted?
b) Did I try to summarize some of the main ideas or insights of readings?
c) Did I try to relate concepts/ideas across readings?
d) Did I share my responses to the readings and to the ideas raised by others? Did I ask others for their responses?
e) Did I move the discussion in a fruitful direction?
f) Did I articulate what I thought was problematic or confusing and ask others for help?
g) Did I relate the readings to contemporary news items, my own experiences, cultural products (films, movies, social media), or public policies?
h) Did I identify points of tension or ambiguity in readings or in discussion?

i) Did I build on what others were saying in constructive ways? Did I ask others for clarification? Did I paraphrase someone else’s remarks to understand them? Did I connect prior remarks to events/other ideas/occurrences?

j) Did I pose a question or initiate a topic for discussion?

Discussion Kickoff (10%)

Two students will be responsible for jumpstarting our discussion every week. They will do this via a presentation of 5-10 minutes (please adhere to the time limit as I will cut you off at this mark). The presentation should aim to generate a productive and engaged discussion of a specific reading by focusing on one aspect that you find to be particularly important, insightful, problematic, controversial, or even ambiguous. This is not meant to be a summary – summaries will be heavily penalized.

Reading Journal (20%)

You are required to keep a journal that records your responses to each week’s set of readings. Your responses should focus on an issue, concept, tension or problem that you find compelling or important. These responses should not be passive summaries but rather articulate what you find significant, difficult, vexing, insightful or problematic. You can think of each entry as an exploratory think piece (of approximately 750 words) that responds to the question, ‘What interests you about this week’s reading?’ Feel free to write the entries in the form of a letter to a friend or peer, if necessary. I am not looking for finished or polished mini-essays but rather evidence of thinking on paper. This is meant to give you an opportunity to: start pursuing a line of thinking; explore ideas; and develop your own language for course themes and issues. Each week’s entry should be uploaded to LEARN by 4 PM on the Friday of the week that it is due. So, for example, the entry for Week 2 would be due by 4 PM on Sept. 21. Your responses should be intelligible but need not aspire to the requirements of more formal pieces of writing. In terms of grading, I will read your responses but refrain from commenting unless there is a pressing need for some intervention on my part. You will get full credit if you turn in the assignment and zero if you do not.

Concept Exposition

This assignment asks you to explore a concept of your choosing (i.e. justice, repair, apology) through a juxtaposition of two ‘primary’ texts. It is meant to help you develop the skill of discerning how a specific concept (i.e. apology, reparation, reintegration) might be made manifest through an embodied standpoint or situation, or alternatively, of conceptualizing a concrete situation through an embodied perspective. You can think of this assignment as having two moments or parts. The first one consists of selecting one of the three books from our course and discussing how a character, a scene, interaction, or aspect of the book embodies the concept of your choosing. Do not be afraid to incorporate elements of doubt, tension, contradiction or ambiguity into the writing, if appropriate or necessary. Also, do not be afraid to address the
dynamism or movement that the concept might undergo as the text unfolds. The second moment requires you to juxtapose another ‘primary’ text of your choosing (a play, a movie, a novel, a biography for instance) and explore how the second text complicates, contradicts, or nuances the understanding of the concept derived from the first text. The essay should be approximately 2,000 – 2,500 words in length and is due via LEARN before **4 PM on Nov. 9**. I will provide more details during the second or third week of class.

**Dialogical Essay**

Write a 4,000 – 4,500 word essay that explores an instance of wounding from a relational perspective. The essay should explore wounding from a multiplicity of perspectives and put them in conversation to tease out the prospects as well as challenges for reconciliation. A three page proposal containing a short description of the essay, as well as an annotated bibliography (at least 10 sources) and research plan should be submitted via LEARN no later than **4 PM on October 19**. This is worth 5% of your overall grade. The essay is due via LEARN no later than **4 PM on December 17**. More details will be provided in class. The essay will be worth 30% of your grade.

**Grading Scale**

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<tr>
<th>Assigned Letter Grades</th>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
<th>Average Calculation Values</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>95</td>
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<td>A</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>73-76</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>70-72</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>67-69</td>
<td>68</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>63-66</td>
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<td>35-41</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>F-</td>
<td>0-34</td>
<td>32</td>
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Grading Policy

"F": Failing work and/or failed to meet course requirements. "D": Unsatisfactory work or lack of fundamental knowledge of the material but demonstrates enough knowledge for a passing grade. "C": Satisfactory knowledge of the basic information or data presented in the course. This is primarily knowledge of the "facts" or content and involves memorizing details and material. "B": Good ability to explain how certain issues and events are related to one another according to explanations currently held in the field; sees relationships between events and theories and can reproduce arguments. "A": Excellent, independent and original thinking and/or creative work.

Late Polices

A penalty will be applied to assignments that are submitted late without prior clearance. The deductions for late work are as follows:

- One day to one week late: 5%
- 8 days to two weeks late: 15%
- More than two weeks late: 20%

UW Policies on Academic Integrity

**Academic Integrity:** In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. See the [UWaterloo Academic Integrity webpage](https://www.uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity) and the [Arts Academic Integrity webpage](https://arts.uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity) for more information.

**Discipline:** A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to [Policy 71 - Student Discipline](https://www.uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity). For typical penalties check [Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties](https://www.uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity).

**Grievance:** A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read [Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances](https://www.uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity), Section 4. When in doubt, please be certain to contact the department’s administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

**Appeals:** A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to [Policy 72 - Student Appeals](https://www.uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity).
**Other Notes for Your Attention**

**Accommodation for Students with Learning Differences**

*Note for students with learning differences:* The AccessAbility Services office, located on the first floor of the Needles Hall extension (1401), collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with learning differences without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the AS office at the beginning of each academic term.

**Mental Health Support**

All of us need a support system. The faculty and staff in Arts encourage students to seek out mental health supports if they are needed.

**On Campus**

- Counselling Services: counselling.services@uwaterloo.ca / 519-888-4567 ext. 32655
- **MATES:** one-to-one peer support program offered by Federation of Students (FEDS) and Counselling Services
- Health Services Emergency service: located across the creek from Student Life Centre

**Off campus, 24/7**

- **Good2Talk:** Free confidential help line for post-secondary students. Phone: 1-866-925-5454
- Grand River Hospital: Emergency care for mental health crisis. Phone: 519-749-433 ext. 6880
- **Here 24/7:** Mental Health and Crisis Service Team. Phone: 1-844-437-3247
- **OK2BME:** set of support services for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or questioning teens in Waterloo. Phone: 519-884-0000 extension 213

Full details can be found online at the Faculty of ARTS website

Download [UWaterloo and regional mental health resources (PDF)](https://learn.uwaterloo.ca). Download the [WatSafe app](https://learn.uwaterloo.ca) to your phone to quickly access mental health support information

**The Writing Centre**

Writing Centre staff offer one-on-one support in planning assignments and presentations, using and documenting research, organizing and structuring papers, and revising for clarity and coherence. Make an appointment or drop in at the Library for quick questions or feedback. To book a 50-minute appointment and to see drop-in hours, visit [www.uwaterloo.ca/writing-centre](https://learn.uwaterloo.ca)

**Desire2Learn (D2L or LEARN) Learning Management System**

I will post course announcements from time to time through the Desire2Learn (LEARN) learning management system. To access these announcements and make use of additional course resources posted in LEARN, go to https://learn.uwaterloo.ca. Enter your WatIAM username and password. If you encounter difficulties, you are welcome to contact learnhelp.uwaterloo.ca. After
you have successfully logged in, click on the PACS 611 link in the yellow “My Courses and Communities” menu. Make sure that the email address listed under your name in LEARN is an address that you check on a regular basis.

Accommodation Due to Illness

From time to time students become ill or have ongoing medical conditions that prevent them from meeting academic obligations. The University is committed to assisting students who are ill and has established the following policy, which is fair and practical. Documentation. Students in on-campus courses who are ill and unable to meet assignment due dates or write a term test or final examination should seek medical treatment and provide confirmation of the illness to the instructor(s) within 48 hours by submitting a completed UWaterloo Verification of Illness Form to support requests for accommodation due to illness. Students in distance education courses must also provide confirmation of the illness but submit it to the Distance Education Office. The UWaterloo Verification of Illness Form is normally the only acceptable medical documentation and is available online. Students who consult their physician or use the services of an off-campus walk-in clinic must provide this form to the attending physician for completion. Doctor’s notes and forms created by the physician or clinic are normally not acceptable. Although not compelled to do so, instructors may accept medical documentation that contains the same information specified on the UWaterloo Verification of Illness Form. Health Services charges a $10 fee for completing the University of Waterloo Verification of Illness Form, which is not covered by OHIP/UHIP. Fees for this service levied by off-campus practitioners are the student’s responsibility.

Required Texts

The following books have been ordered by the bookstore.

*Ta-Nehisi Coates, *Between the World and Me* (Spiegel & Grau, 2015)

All other required readings unless otherwise noted, will be available via E-Reserve. E-Reserve readings will be linked to LEARN.

Course Schedule

*Please note that this schedule may change to reflect the rhythm and pace of our class. I will announce any such changes both in class and via LEARN. Expect to read an average of somewhere in the range of 75-100 pages per week. As we progress, I may add to, or change some of the readings, depending on how our discussions unfold. If you have any further readings that you would like to recommend to the rest of us, please feel free to do so.*
Week 1 Sept. 12: Introductions, Initial Explorations and Course Overview

**Recommended**
- V.V. Ganeshananthan, “We Regret to Inform you that your condolences cannot be accepted at this time.” In *End of War in Sri Lanka: Reflections and Challenges*. Available online.

Week 2 Sept. 19: Embodiment, Encounter and Relationality

**Required**

**Highly Recommended**
- Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin White Masks* (the chapter, “Lived Experience of the Black Man” can be found online).

Week 3 Sept. 26: Encountering ‘Prime Evil’

**Required**

**Recommended**
- Lyn S. Graybill, *Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa: Miracle or Model?* (Lynne Rienner, 2002)

**Week 4 Oct. 3:** What is forgiveness? How does it work? Are remorse and apology prerequisites for forgiveness? What kinds of relationality are produced through apology, remorse and forgiveness. What are the obstacles to forgiveness?

**Required**

**Week 5 Oct. 12:** What modes of relation do apology and remorse initiate? Should perpetrators show remorse to be reintegrated into the social order? How would the character “Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela” respond to the community performances and requirements narrated by Theidon and Shaw?

**Required**

**Recommended**
**Week 6 Oct. 17: Apology and Acknowledgement**

**Required**
- Drew Hayden Taylor, *God and the Indian*
- Prime Minister Stephen Harper, “Statement of Apology to Former Students of Indian Residential Schools,” available online.

**Week 7 Oct. 24: What is settler colonialism and how does it work? How does the TRC envision reconciliation? Do you find the TRC’s vision of reconciliation adequate/acceptable? What is the role of beneficiaries/bystanders/settlers/‘exogenous others’ in reconciliation?**

**Required**

**Week 8 Oct. 31: What is the work required of settlers, beneficiaries and bystanders? What does reconciliation offer for them? What is decolonization? What does decolonization mean for settlers and beneficiaries?**

**Required**
- Waziyatawin, “Understanding Colonizer Status,” Available online.
- Ashis Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy*, pp. 29-48 (Section V of Chapter 1). This is available as an e-book through PRIMO.
Week 9 Nov. 7: Traumatic Truth

**Required**
- Ta-Nehisi Coates, *Between the World and Me*.
- Jenny Edkins, *Trauma and the Memory of Politics*, pp. 1-16.

Week 10 Nov. 14: How do we think about racial reconciliation after having encountered *Between the World & Me*?

**Required**
- Raoul Peck (Dir.) *I am Not Your Negro* (2016) (select scenes)
- James Baldwin, “A Letter to my Nephew,” Available [online](#).
- Yawo Brown, “The Subtle Linguistics of Polite White Supremacy,” available [online](#).

Week 11 Nov. 21: How to move towards racial reconciliation?

- Readings to be assigned based on course progress and discussion so far.
- Possible small group exercise.

Week 12 Nov. 28: Reflections & Anticipations